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C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 000611

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/ANP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/18/2014

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [NZ](#)

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND PRAISED BY ISLAMIC RESISTANCE MOVEMENT
HAMAS FOR RESPONSE TO ISRAELI SPY SCANDAL

REF: A. WELLINGTON 605

[B](#). WELLINGTON 599

Classified By: POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COUNSELOR,
TIMOTHY ZUNIGA-BROWN, FOR REASONS 1.5(B,D)

[1](#)1. (U) According to media reports, the Palestinian terrorist organization Hamas issued a press release July 17 thanking the GoNZ for Prime Minister Helen Clark's strong response to the conviction of two suspected Israeli intelligence agents (ref a). The press release urged other countries to follow the model set by New Zealand in "adopting firm measures against the Zionist entity's violations of laws on foreign lands to achieve certain targets."

[1](#)2. (U) The GNZ has been quick to renounce any sympathy for Hamas. PM Clark noted that Hamas should not take comfort from the GoNZ's actions, and if Hamas agents had committed the same crimes, they would be subject to the same prosecution. Domestic media reported separately that a religious terrorism professor at Auckland University suggested that NZ's position offers New Zealand military serving in Iraq "protection."

[1](#)3. (C) Comment: New Zealand continues to voice its strong support of the Roadmap, but is loathe to take actions that would identify it as a supporter of Israel and, by proxy, the United States. The GoNZ prides itself on its multi-lateral credentials (ref B) but has been increasingly trying to stand alongside "Non-Aligned" countries. Its overly strong reaction to Israel over this issue suggests the GNZ sees this flap as an opportunity to bolster its credibility with the Arab community, and by doing so, perhaps, help NZ lamb and other products gain greater access to a larger and more lucrative market.
Swindells